

Congressman Jesse Jackson, Jr., today said, "I voted `NO' on H. Res. 861 because the so-called debate on global terrorism had virtually nothing to do with terrorism and everything to do with mid-term election politics. While talking statesmanlike in public, Republican Majority Leader John Boehner sent a secret 'message' memo to Republicans urging them in the debate to exploit the 9/11 tragedy (which the memo mentions seven times) by linking 9/11 to Iraq, and to use disparaging terms against those who opposes the President's anti-terrorism strategy, such as `sheepish,' `weak,' and `prone to waver endlessly.'

"The `debate' was an attempt by Republicans to portray Democrats as `weak on national defense and security' with a willingness to `cut and run' in Iraq. However, the real issues in the debate over Iraq are that we went to war based on a set of lies by the Bush Administration; the war has been massively mismanaged by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld; our allies are leaving us alone in Iraq because they *have* set timetables for leaving; the situation in Afghanistan seems to be worsening; Iraq has served as a diversion of focus and resources with regard to international terrorism; Iraq is as divided as ever along sectarian and religious lines and may be in or on the verge of a civil war; the U.S. effort there has turned Iraq into a world-wide terrorist recruiting and training camp to be deployed all over the world; Americans are *less secure* at home and around the world today than they were before 9/11 because of Iraq; our image in the world has suffered immeasurable harm; and the security situation for Iraqis is worsening every day as bombs killing Iraqi security forces and civilians are increasing month-by-month.

"On the day that the American death toll in Iraq reached 2,500 and the President's spokesperson, Tony Snow said, `It's only a number', Republicans chose to try to change the subject by engaging in politics rather than debate the real issues in Iraq," Jackson concluded.